

ACORN



The Journal of The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario





ACORN

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the Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, Minister, is gratefully acknowledged.

Cover: Alma College, St. Thomas. Constructed 1878-81 the High Victorian girls' school was designated under the Ontario Heritage Act in 1994. It is currently abandoned, rapidly deteriorating and at risk.

Photo: *PreservationWorks!*

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Incorporated in 1933
to preserve buildings and
structures of architectural
merit and places of natural
beauty or interest

From the Editor

Dan Schneider



Those of you interested in legislation affecting heritage will want to check this out. Buried in the 306 page Bill 53, the proposed City of Toronto Act, 2005, introduced in December, is a change that will affect so-called listed property.

Listed property is property of cultural heritage value or interest that is not designated but which has been included on the municipal heritage register (this ability to formally list properties was one of the changes to the Act made last year).

Subsection 11(2) of Schedule B of the bill would amend the Ontario Heritage Act to require that the owner of a listed property give the municipality at least 60 days notice of the owner's intention to demolish or remove a building or structure on the property. Note that this change will apply in all municipalities, not just the City of Toronto.

This change is designed to provide the municipality with time to determine whether the listed property should be designated in order to prevent its demolition. It is a response to concerns from the City of Toronto and others that the January 1 tightening of timeframes under which municipalities must respond to applications for permits under the Building Code Act would give no leeway for action to designate a threatened building.

* * * * *

Looking forward to seeing many of you at the ground-breaking (or should I say wave-making) joint conference on the Rideau in June. Full details in this issue. Be there or beware— you'll have missed a landmark weekend!

* * * * *

And before I forget...Rollo said to remind you to RENEW YOUR ACO MEMBERSHIP for 2006. Please use the form on page 15. Thanks!

President's Message

Scott Valens



The ACO celebrated a wonderful dinner in November at the Arts and Letters Club. At this annual fundraiser, we featured a rather new concept, and one we hope to grow on: a personal guided tour of a home that represents one of

the finest works of residential architecture in the country.

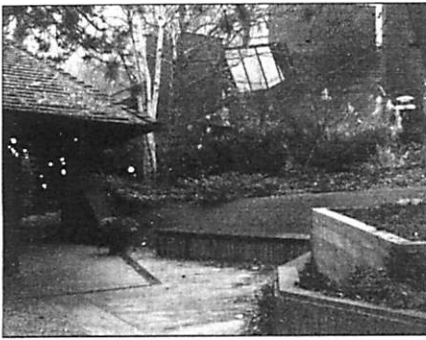
Thanks to ACO member Stephen Otto and ACO Manager Rollo Myers, a Rosedale couple and their son Graham offered a tour of their Ron Thom-designed Fraser House in Toronto. The house, for me, is one that I have coveted as one of the most unique and exquisite examples of residential building. Twelve lucky people, at a cost of \$100 each, all donated to the ACO, participated in a two hour long tour of the home and its grounds nestled in a Rosedale wooded ravine.

Graham, at the time a second-year Waterloo architecture student, convinced his parents, now recent empty nesters, to consider purchasing and restoring the Fraser House. After a number of intense tours of the home, with the entire family in agreement, the couple acquired the house, and embarked on the adventure of restoring this unique piece of architecture.

Graham was candid in his introduction to the 12 of us that he and five other school friends helped to research and update the home, which, by the way, had not been altered nor properly maintained since it was completed in 1968. "The one thing we did not want to be known as," noted Graham, "were the ones who ruined the Thom House." It struck me that here was an honourable task, and a refreshing tale of architectural conservation that we do not hear of often enough—one about owners who feel a sense of respectful stewardship for the great pieces of architecture in their care.

How often are we presented with property owners who feel that, once they have purchased a significant architectural property, it is theirs to do with as they please? It is theirs to ruin, demolish, or alter beyond reproach, at their pleasure. How short-sighted and ill-informed.

The Fraser House, as Graham pointed out, had a substantial number of drawbacks when the family acquired the property. The exposed interior wood ceilings and cork floors had darkened to the point that the house was very gloomy inside; skylights, windows and roof leaked; the rooms were numerous and quite



Front elevation of the Fraser House, Toronto, location of an exclusive ACO tour in November 2005. To the left is the covered entrance path between the carport and the house. The tour is described by ACO President Scott Valens in his President's Message. *Photo: Scott Valens*



In November 2005 a group of ACO members enjoyed an exclusive tour of the Fraser House, a Ron-Thom designed residence in Toronto's Rosedale. The tour is described by ACO President Scott Valens in his President's Message. *Photo: Scott Valens*

small; and the place lacked storage space. Through extensive custom cabinetry design, and careful material analysis, Graham not only made the home livable again, he brought fresh thinking into the building. The result was an updated kitchen; new master suite on the lower level; and a series of tree house-like study/library spaces on the upper level that provide quiet individual spaces for work and contemplation that make one feel like they are secretly nested high up in a tree above the forest floor far below.

One of the outstanding original features of this home is the fact that, while built at the height of '60s modernism of flat box-like orthogonal lines (reflected in the surrounding '60s buildings, like the Parkin-designed home next door), the Fraser House does not have a right angle in the entire place. It is wholly whimsical, radially-planned around a quasi-spiral staircase at centre. As I discovered and remarked to one of the tour participants, this home really cannot be captured at all through photographs (something I tried to do); it must be experienced.

The site alone is spectacular and, looking southeast into the ravine from many of the studied views from the house, it is almost impossible to believe that you are in downtown Toronto. From the outset, Graham proposed restoring the ravine site. Beginning with the removal of invasive plant species, and the planting of substantial numbers of native tree and bush varieties, the site is setting a standard of careful regeneration of sustainable native plant material.

Interestingly, I left that day feeling refreshed. Here was truly great architecture, full of the best attributes,

involving all the senses, and leaving one with mental images of unique moments in the home, moments of wonder and discovery. Bravo to the new owners who had the courage to explore living in something not at all conventional, and to place their trust in Graham and his cohorts to help craft a sympathetic solution of careful restoration, with handcrafted installations of cabinetry and lighting that have improved on the original and completed the whole. This, for those of us who were fortunate to experience the Fraser House that day, is stewardship at its best.

Manager's Report

Rollo Myers



Guelph has successfully approached the ACO about forming a new branch, and discussions are continuing with Heritage Mississauga.

At head office the electronic receipting has been used to issue nearly 80 provincial-office receipts for the ACO dinner attendees, sponsors, donors and for membership renewals. A few modifications are indicated, such as combining the mailing label with the receipt to avoid having to type the name and address a second time. These will be worked out with the design consultant, and the system will then be ready to be expanded to the branches.

The applications and interviews for the PreservationWorks! part-time manager, funded under an Ontario Trillium Foundation one-year grant, are now complete—and the successful candidate is R. Scott James, known to many of you from his 12 years as executive director of the Toronto Historical Board; his 10 years as director of records and city archivist before that; his involvement as a consultant with the Waterfront Regeneration Trust and the Toronto Transition Team; and as advisor to the Metronome Project at Bathurst Quay in Toronto and a number of other organizations. Scott brings broad experience in planning, organizing and managing heritage programs, including identification and preservation of heritage buildings, reviewing development proposals, conducting research, and being actively involved in community development. His experience will be invaluable as ACO sets about expanding its popular PreservationWorks! program.

Enquiries continue to arrive on a wide variety of built heritage issues: a rare 1840s adobe dwelling and an 1850 railway bridge in Weston; preservation of structural elements from the 1850s Chilligo Dam in Cambridge; the Winchester Hotel in Toronto; an at-risk mill in Mississippi Mills; Barnum House in Grafton; the McCormick house on Gothic Avenue in Toronto; the Banting homestead in Alliston; the historic Victory Soya Mills silos in Toronto; and historic schools recently demolished in Peterborough and Collingwood. These are just a few examples of the range of concerns.

The ACO is most fortunate to have received a four-figure donation from The McLean Foundation. While we rely on the generosity of our supporters and are grateful for any and all donations, this welcome additional funding will allow us to speed up the ongoing streamlining of our widely dispersed activities by doing as much as possible electronically.

Jones and DesLaurier's Canadian Heritage Insurance Program—created recently to answer the special need for coverage for heritage buildings—has been able to place all referrals, including the Heritage Canada Foundation, according to principal Danny Sgro. This is an encouraging development for those having difficulty insuring their listed or designated properties. Another welcome initiative to address this issue is the brochure recently sent by the Insurance Bureau of Canada to its membership, hopefully going a long way to dealing with the misinformation that persists about insuring older buildings.

Finally, Dr. Robert Shipley is ready to launch The Lazarus Effect, his ACO Trillium grant report on comparative renovation costs.

Doors Open Kincardine and Paisley 2005

Jane Rigby



Kincardine Lighthouse
Photo: Jane Rigby

House is the Kincardine Lighthouse, built in 1880 and the only lighthouse in Ontario located in town. Near Paisley, Stark's Mill, originally built in 1854, and rebuilt after a fire in 1884, proved popular. Abandoned since 1975, the new owners are slowly restoring it and opened four of the five floors for viewing. Although the mill was built to have water flowing through its basement, buildings such as the Steele Block were built to withstand the floods that were frequent in Paisley before the flood bypass was constructed. Dropping one and a half stories from street level at the rear, all this underpinning was on view.

A direct result of the research involved in Doors Open, we have discovered a series of houses built by Alexander (Sandy) Brunton, a Scottish stonemason between 1884 and 1885. There are three in the area, and perhaps more.

Doors Open has always included Kincardine's waterfront Dance Pavilion in its itinerary to keep up awareness of the building's plight. It is wonderful that the ACO has stepped in to help save this structure that means so much to many old timers. The restored structure will be an asset to the community, adding a much needed meeting place and entertainment space. Next year, all being well, we will be able to show off a completed, refurbished structure, ready for live entertainment.

Doors Open included businesses, churches, municipally-owned buildings (such as former town halls and museums), private homes, a funeral home, a former bank with house attached (once the home of Col. Hugh Clark, MP, great uncle of former Prime Minister Joe Clark), a Masonic Lodge, and a nuclear power plant and wind farm. We even had four contrasting gardens. There was something for everyone.

Added attractions to our Doors Open are live events. One private home and garden had an impromptu fiddle-fest; the Victoria Park Gallery members mounted a heritage exhibit; the



Malcolm-Beaton House, Kincardine
Photo: Jane Rigby

Our event in Kincardine and Paisley brought the 2005 Doors Open Ontario season to a close. The weekend of October 15 and 16 was beautiful; we could not have asked for better autumn weather! The Village of Paisley joined the Municipality of Kincardine for our second Doors Open, for a total of 30 sites.

Who would have thought in our little rural area we would muster 30 sites? Among them was the Walker House, an 1850 tavern/hotel which is being restored after a devastating fire in 1995. It is the oldest building in Kincardine and last wooden hotel in Grey/Bruce. Across from the Walker

Penetangore Pipe Band performed at Bruce Power on Sunday afternoon; and later on Sunday the gifted organist at the Anglican Church of the Messiah, Alex Danyanovich, gave an hour-long organ recital that set the soul soaring. Even the Phantom Piper piped the sun down from the top of the lighthouse for one last time until next summer.

A thoroughly wonderful time was had by all, organizers, volunteers, participants, site owners and visitors. We think we will do it again next year!

Jane Rigby is chair of Doors Open Kincardine.

Doors Open London 2005

Marlyn Loft

The doors of 74 significant buildings were opened on the weekend of October 2 and 3 for London's fourth Doors Open event. This was four more than in 2004 and included such popular new sites as Philip Aziz Gallery and Studio, London Police Service Headquarters, Sifton Botanical Bog, Club Phoenix (formerly Bank of Montreal) and Queen's Village for Seniors.

Because 2005 was the City of London's 150th anniversary, the Doors Open organizing committee initiated several special events. These included a September lecture series, a very successful ghost walk in downtown called the Lost Soul Stroll, and a Sesquicentennial self-guided walk of the core area. Other innovations were five information stations and brochures describing Green Doors Open sites and Child-Friendly sites.

Once again many ACO members were involved as part of the organizing committee and as volunteers at the sites.

Visitors enjoyed perfect fall weather as they toured churches, mansions, museums and environmental areas. The feedback has been enthusiastic and positive.

Marlyn Loft is on the Doors Open London Committee.



Stark's Mill, Paisley
Photo: Jane Rigby

Heritage Preservation and Places of Worship

Robert Saunders



St. Clare of Assisi Church, Windsor
Photo: Nancy Morand

Ontario is very fortunate in possessing a rich legacy in its churches and other places of worship. Across the province there is a variety of buildings of immense interest to people in their communities and often to the province as a whole.

These buildings range in style from the simple structures of the Methodist Conger meeting house north of Picton to the classical St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Niagara-on-the-Lake to the Gothic St. John's Anglican Church in Peterborough. There are lovely Gothic polychromatic brick churches such as St. Stephen in the Fields and Renaissance classic designs like St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church on Power Street, both in Toronto. St. Peter's Basilica in London is a French Gothic influenced building. In Toronto and the other large cities there are

lovely synagogues of heritage interest. The temple of the Children of Peace at Sharon is a unique treasure of design and craftsmanship. In many smaller centres the churches are the major buildings.

Places of worship are of enormous cultural heritage interest everywhere. We may think of the great cathedrals and abbeys of Europe, the lovely mediaeval churches in villages across Europe, the temples of Angkor Wat in Cambodia or Buddhist shrines in China and Japan. We may feel that we do not have the spectacular architecture of these sites, but there is here a heritage of beautiful nineteenth and twentieth century architecture and craftsmanship in our churches. The Heritage Canada Foundation chose the heritage of places of worship as its theme for heritage week in 2005. A teaching guide and attractive poster were produced and distributed widely across Canada.

There is a broad spectrum of design in Ontario. Church buildings in Canada have been influenced strongly by European traditions and in the twentieth century often by American architects. Nineteenth century Protestant church design was particularly affected by English architects, in the latter part of the century particularly by the Gothic revival. Among the works of many of Ontario's best nineteenth century architects are notable churches. One, Henry Langley, designed about seventy churches, most in Gothic revival. But the purpose of this paper is not to discuss church architecture.

It is not simply architectural interest that gives churches their cultural heritage value: it is their roles in the communities they have served. Until the 1960s, Ontarians were church-going people. Churches were social centres for their communities and neighbourhoods not only in smaller centres but in cities like Hamilton, Ottawa and Toronto. Churches in eastern and northeastern Ontario were deeply involved in the preservation of francophone culture. At the turn of the century Monday newspapers carried major stories about the sermons preached from local pulpits on the Sunday. In other words, for many people churches are of enormous community heritage interest: they are almost our family and community history.

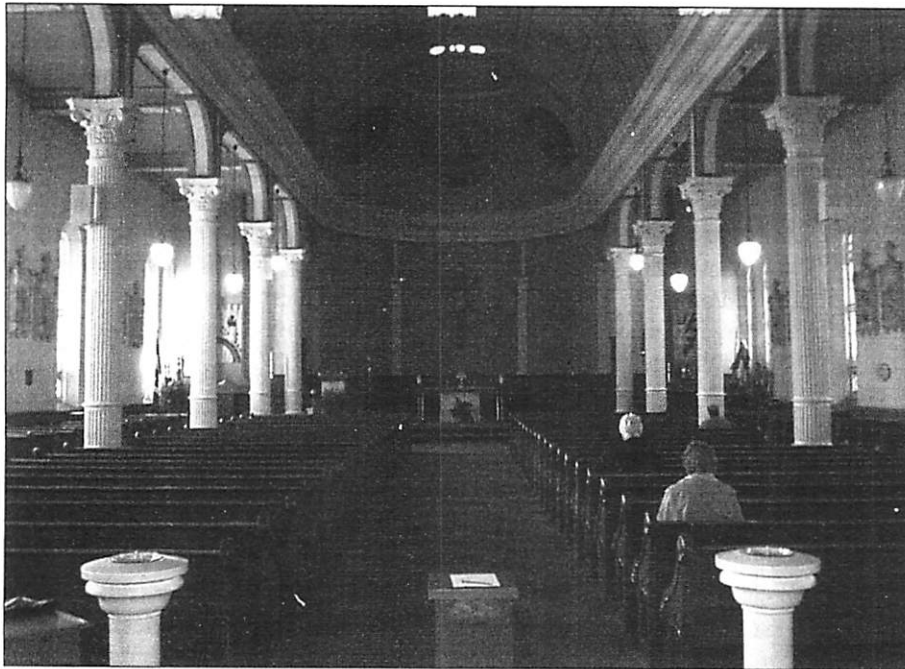
Society and government have recognized the role that churches play in our society by exempting places of worship from property taxation. Many people believe that

this indirect contribution to churches by the society at large should give that society some voice in the disposition of religious properties if they are no longer needed by a church. The churches reject this saying that the tax exemption has not been a gift to the churches; rather it is in exchange for the many services which the churches have provided to society beyond the moral and the spiritual—services such as making space available for community groups, providing social services like personal counseling, community information centres, assistance to immigrants, help to the homeless and housing social agencies.

A mixture of factors is causing many church buildings to lose their function as places of worship. Declining involvement in churches and indeed in all kinds of organizations in civil society has led to declining numbers in congregations. Changing demographic patterns in many urban areas mean that the population base for attendance in the old mainline denominations is changing as original residents die or move away. Rural populations now look towards larger centres for shopping and leisure activities and the small country church is often no longer viable, a trend which began with the automobile.

The process of church closings and realignments in Canada began in the 1920s with the amalgamation creating the United Church of Canada: many church buildings were closed and sold or abandoned. In the older parts of urban centres, many denominations began closing churches in the 1930s and '40s. Declining church attendance in Quebec is forcing the Roman Catholic Church to close large numbers of buildings and to declare them surplus to their needs. In the past few years many rural churches have been closed.

Even the design of church buildings and properties is a problem. A key issue now is parking: churches without parking facilities are at a disadvantage. New church building entrances are designed with security and accessibility for the disabled in mind. They see themselves as community centres and want facilities that can house multiple uses. Many groups now want the



Annonciation Church (interior),
Pointe aux Roches (Stoney Point)
Photo: André Chenier

worship area space to be flexible with individual chairs and dividers for various events. Others want theatre type seating. A large narthex/foyer outside the worship area is seen as very important for gathering for congregational fellowship after worship services.

Older churches are often on small properties and find it both difficult and costly to try to modernize their facilities. Indeed, many groups reject traditional looking buildings because they feel that the brand identification they create is tainted and negative. On the other hand, many people want the beauty and sense of tradition that the older architectural styles create. New buildings are being built, however, in very different styles than those of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries because of the cost of building in the older styles and the feeling that they are less hospitable.

Churches often find themselves in the position that their buildings are a burden to them. This problem, exacerbated by changing demographics and declining attendance and the cost of maintaining those buildings, is a serious concern to churches. As a result, congregations may contemplate closure of a building and amalgamation with another congregation or simply closing. It is not an easy decision because the

experience of closing church buildings is that as many as 25 percent of the members, because of their attachment to a particular building, do not move to another congregation but lose their connection to a church.

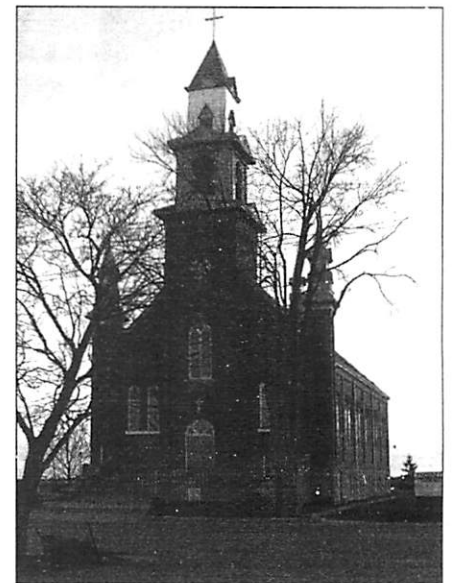
This is not just an Ontario or a Canadian problem: it is a western world problem. The same factors at work in this province are affecting churches in western Europe, the British Isles, Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

In Britain, the Church of England began closing churches right after the Second World War. The Church Commissioners who hold the property of the Church of England now have some 16,000 properties of which 12,000 are classified as having at least some degree of heritage interest. Since the 1960s, some 1660 churches have been closed. In the 1960s and '70s, they were selling the Georgian and Victorian rectories to raise money to repair church buildings. Many church buildings have been sold for other uses. When the author last checked the Commissioners' website, there were 12 church buildings for sale, among them some mediaeval churches. There are several more for sale in the London diocese as well.

In many Ontario communities churches see their current mission as one of social outreach to assist the disadvantaged or immigrants. They wish to alter their buildings in a way

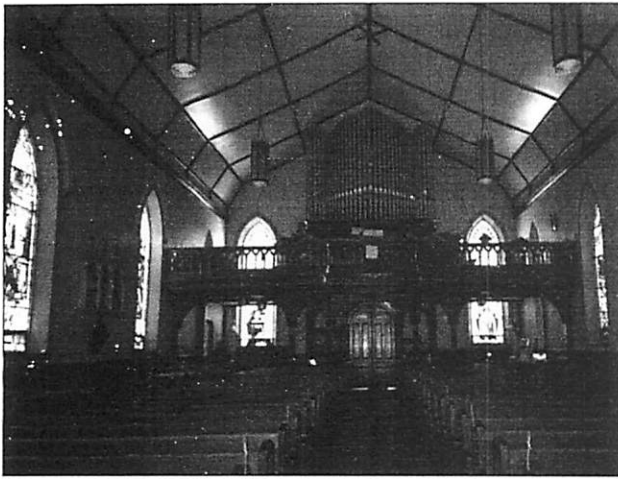
which will make them more useable for these ministries. They want to make their buildings more accessible to the community, to make them into community and information centres or to offer programs for the homeless such as "out of the cold" or meal services. These church communities are anxious about possible restrictions that a heritage identification might impose on their ability to deal with these issues in their buildings.

Some churches in Toronto and elsewhere are losing or have lost their congregations but have taken on a new life as social and community services centres. Often there is not income to maintain the building properly. Repairs become a major problem. Without sufficient income, a congregation may not be able to afford the adaptation for other uses and look to land developers as a way to get what they feel they need.



Annonciation Church,
Pointe aux Roches (Stoney Point)
Photo: David Tremblay

If the church community is still well and viable it may wish to adapt the structure or even construct new facilities for that kind of use. Working with a developer to redesign their property for both church community needs and development needs is a way to achieve this goal, but perhaps at the cost of the old church building. It is not an impossible problem as the current alterations and additions on the north end of the Metropolitan United Church property in downtown Toronto illustrate. Some negotiation may be needed to find a



Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church (interior), Walkerton
Photo: Brian Dietrich



Evangelical Brethren Church (interior), Freeport
Photo: John Arndt

way to allow for the alterations while preserving the heritage attributes of the building, but a creative architectural design can be found. But not all churches are situated as well as Metropolitan.

Alterations can work around heritage elements while preserving their integrity. Usually municipal heritage committees have been reluctant to identify interior elements of heritage buildings in designating them because their first concern has been the streetscapes. However, the interiors of churches are often of great architectural interest. The cultural heritage attributes of a church, both outside and inside, may well be part of the "branding" for the church: it should exercise some care in altering the structural and other elements which may be part of the identity of the particular church building.

The recent amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act created great anxiety in some church communities because of the proposed increase in municipal control

over designated properties. These groups feel that they may have undue burdens imposed upon them by heritage committees and municipal councils in maintenance and dealing with alterations. They believe that designations and/or fighting designations will be costly and that their resources are better put to uses related to their mission. Designation may also, they fear, impose heavier insurance costs for their buildings just as it may for other heritage buildings.

Church organizations have resisted the formal designation of their buildings under the Ontario Heritage Act because of these factors. They will say that their mission is not the preservation of buildings. They will also say that it is important as part of that mission that what resources they have be able to be mobilized for use in carrying out that mission. They are quite happy to

sell a building for reuse as long as they receive what they feel is a fair market value for the property.

Churches are often seen by outsiders as wealthy. They do have a lot of assets: the problem is that the most valuable assets are generally the heritage buildings and properties themselves. And except for the very few well-endowed congregations, churches are "house poor." The Anglican and Roman Catholic churches have, because of their centralized diocesan structures, been able to subsidize the ministries of some less than viable congregations. But this assistance really comes from other congregations through their contributions to the central church organization and as local churches are squeezed financially this type of "transfer payment" becomes more problematic.

The most serious issue arises when a church community wishes to divest itself of a heritage building because it can no longer keep it going. The problem of the sale and reuse of church buildings is

complex. In smaller towns with slower economic growth, the difficulty may be to find a reuse or even a buyer willing to assume the costs to demolish the building to redevelop the property. Councils may not be willing to re-zone church properties to non-institutional uses or what they see as incompatible or undesirable commercial or other uses. Nor is there the range of alternative uses which are available in larger urbanized areas.

Designation of a building may make it either more or less desirable depending on the possible use contemplated. It may well be that the heritage "branding" and the identification of quality involved in designation would make the building more interesting to a buyer, particularly in rural areas and smaller centres. An uncertain factor is that municipal councils are always interested in increasing their assessment and may welcome the best possible taxable asset.

Many rural churches—particularly the old crossroads churches, often very handsome buildings—can become orphans in the landscape unless a buyer can be found to reuse the structure for residential or retail purposes. The issues around safe water may also make the reuse of such buildings problematic.

In larger urban areas such as Toronto the issues are more difficult. The cycle of urban church use appears to be that the old mainline church in the centre city—probably an essentially British institution—loses its congregational base as the old members die and others move out of the city. The younger people moving back into the city centre do not join these churches. The congregation may then sell the property to another, probably ethnic-based, congregation which is looking for a church building. That community finds after a few years that it is better to build in the suburbs because of the problems of parking or access for its own people. What do they do with the building? Sell it for reuse? They want to maximize the return so that they can build elsewhere and they may not have the same attachment to the building that the previous congregation had. Even the mainline denominations closing churches look for the best possible return on the property so that the money may be used in other services.

It is reasonable to expect that the users of a property who are getting value for use of

the property will maintain it, but in the cycle of change too often the congregation of a church finds itself unable financially to do so solely on voluntary contributions. Like other property owners unable to keep up a building, they will wish to sell. If another use for the building—residential or cultural or other—can be found, that is great. If not, what is to be done?

If the building is of cultural heritage interest, the problem becomes how to save the building from demolition and the property from redevelopment. Often people in the community around a structure at risk become involved, pressing to retain what they see as a community landmark. In a recent protest over demolition of a church in Toronto, a church, which had not been identified as of any heritage interest until local residents became concerned, turned into a centre of controversy. Some descendants of people who had founded the church even turned up to protest that their grandparents had donated time, energy and money to the building of the church and they did not want to see that work destroyed. They said they felt betrayed in that the trust of their forefathers was being destroyed.

Church communities and leaders may well be cynical about cries to preserve these buildings because so many of the people who want to save them are not supporters of the church, nor users of the buildings, nor financial contributors to their maintenance.

As for reuse, church buildings, which typically have a fairly large open space, can be adapted for all kinds of uses: for example, performance spaces, restaurants, retail or studio or gallery spaces and in smaller buildings simply for single or double residential use. In large volume buildings the interior may be redesigned and refitted to make condo lofts or multiple office or commercial spaces. One of the first church buildings in Toronto to

be so modified was the Olivet Congregational Church at the corner of Scollard and Hazelton in 1972-73. In recent years, some large churches in Toronto have been converted to residential condominium use and their units command premium prices because of the heritage and character of the buildings.

Churches are also concerned that designation may harm the real estate value of their properties particularly if the building is subject to demolition controls or limits on alterations for reuse. The impact of designation on real estate values is not the disadvantage that many real estate people claim; an article of their faith is that any limitation on a title will have a negative impact on the value. But research suggests that designation has little impact on the value of a property unless that property can be put to a more profitable use.

Underlying all of this is the problem is money, money which could preserve some of these church buildings. Provincial governments are reluctant to put scarce resources into areas such as heritage preservation. The municipal and provincial property tax assistance now possible for municipalities might well be used as a means of making the reuse of a church building more attractive to a possible owner. The property tax relief possible under the current Ontario legislation now appears to be used primarily for purposes related to area redevelopment or support to old downtown business areas. But property tax assistance is meaningless to churches who continue their ministry. And some churches refuse on ethical grounds to apply for assistance from programs which rely on lottery funding

For a church trying to maintain its own property and support its mission, there is no help. In the days of the designated property grants in the 1980s and '90s,


there was interest in heritage designation by churches because of the possibility of some assistance with repairs. But there is nothing now. In Ontario we do not have the kind of government supported foundation to assist in church preservation that Quebec has. Here is a case where a local heritage committee might assist in the creation, for example, of a community based foundation to assist in maintenance of church buildings that the community as a whole feels are important. St. Mark's in Port Hope, for example, already enjoys the support of such a foundation.

The heritage of churches and other places of worship in Ontario are important to both the communities in which they reside and to the province as a whole. It is a heritage too important to ignore and a great legacy to future generations. The problem of preserving church buildings and other places of worship of cultural heritage value is one which we must address.

In a spring 2005 issue of Built Heritage News, Catherine Nasmith paraphrased American preservation writer Anthony Tung as follows:

Every country that has heritage laws has had to come to terms with churches as a special case. It is generally recognized that churches are not free to act in the same way as private landowners because of the society's financial and cultural investment in those properties. Equally, if societies expect church buildings to be retained for the common good, then it is appropriate for society to provide sufficient support to allow that to happen. Historically churches have had a unique status in society, and because of their important role have been supported through tax exemptions and other concessions not available to other property owners...[T]he historical financial support of churches by the broader society creates a common ownership and obligation which is provided for, not through permitting demolition, but through financial support mechanisms that recognize the broader societal role that churches and church buildings play, even when deconsecrated.

Robert Saunders is Chair of the Toronto Preservation Board and a former chair of Community Heritage Ontario.



****ACORN 2006 Deadlines****
Summer Issue (no branch reports) - July 1
Fall Issue (includes branch reports) - October 1
Contributors - please mark your calendars now!

Heritage Districts—What Has Changed?

Marc Kemerer

There has been some confusion within the heritage community over the extent of new protections afforded heritage conservation districts (“districts”) and the status of existing districts with recent passage of the Ontario Heritage Amendment Act, 2005 (the “Act”). The purpose of this article is to set out that, while new or re-enacted districts will be better protected, existing districts are not made redundant, but rather maintain the status they had under the old Act and obtain certain new protections, most particularly, with respect to demolition control.

Under the old Act, municipal councils could designate districts in defined areas of the municipality provided that the municipality had provisions in its official plan relating to the establishment of districts. The Act did not set standards for the scope of study of any area(s) proposed for designation nor did it require the adoption of heritage conservation district plans, although municipalities such as the City of Toronto were becoming more prescriptive in establishing district plans.

As the designation of districts allowed municipal councils greater power over change within districts, by requiring permits to erect, demolish, alter, or remove any building or structure within a district, districts have become increasingly recognised as an important preservation tool. District plans under the old Act, however, while intended to guide development and thus useful as planning instruments, including in hearings before the Ontario Municipal Board (the “Board”), did not clearly bind municipal councils. As an example, the Town of Collingwood recently considered approving a development proposal in Collingwood’s Downtown Heritage District which is contrary to the District Plan, and Town Council issued demolition permits for two buildings rated as “exceptional” in connection with the proposed development.

Another limitation for districts was the ability of owners to demolish buildings 180 days after the refusal of the permit application by a municipal council, or, where the municipal council had failed to make a decision, 270 days after the demolition application was filed with the municipality. Refusals of permits to alter or erect a building were subject to a right of appeal to the Board.

The (new) Act, which requires a prescribed scope of study for areas proposed to be designated (s.40) and a detailed district plan (s.41.1), brings positive change in this regard, by prohibiting councils from carrying out any public work or passing any by-laws for any purpose contrary to the objectives set out in district plans established after April 28, 2005 (s.41.2). These new protections (the “s.41 protections”) further elevate the value and usefulness of districts: municipalities and the Board will be required to privilege new district plans over other planning instruments. Moreover, the requirement for a detailed scope of study and subsequent district plan will make district plans easier to defend if appealed to the Board.

The corollary to this is that districts established prior to April 28, 2005 are not accorded as much protection as newly enacted districts, unless municipal councils, meeting the content and process requirements of the Act, re-adopt the district plan (s.41.1(2)). Re-enacting a district plan, however, requires a willing council and reopens the designation to appeal before the Board, a scenario many heritage planners or councils will not want to (re)visit, even where detailed district plans exist. There may be an argument that any appeal of a re-enacted plan, where the plan was previously upheld by the Board, represents an abuse of process, but this requires resources that not all municipalities will be willing to commit. Thus two classes of districts have been created.

The policy reason for not fitting existing districts with the s.41 protections is that the lack of a uniform standard and process for existing districts and potentially different expectations of district residents or municipal councils when they were developed could result in an unfair or unclear application of new standards to existing situations. For example, there may be a lack of any principles to apply against new development and/or the public may not have been consulted on the details of the district plan.

As a final note, the Act has eliminated the automatic right to demolish a building within a district, although a right of appeal to the Board is provided should a municipal council refuse a demolition permit (s. 42(6)). Importantly, protection over demolition applies to both existing and new districts, subject to the s.42 transition provisions, a big gain for heritage advocates.

It is important to re-state that pre-April 28, 2005 districts maintain the same status they have always had along with certain new powers—they have not, as has been suggested by some, been diminished. Rather, they simply will not enjoy the s.41 protections, and advocates for districts must continue to rely on the documentation behind them and the increased awareness of, and appreciation for, heritage on the part of planning authorities.

Marc Kemerer is a planning and environmental lawyer with the law firm of Wood Bull LLP.

Built Heritage News— try it, you’ll like it

Built Heritage News is the on-line newsletter, free-for-the-asking, turned out in the public interest for the last three and a half years by Catherine Nasmith Architect, whose principal, Cathy Nasmith, wearing another hat, is Vice-President of the ACO. BHN has been a runaway success in delivering up-to-date news on preservation issues in Ontario to its subscribers, now numbering nearly one thousand, who include heritage supporters and many ACO members.

If you haven’t already done so, now may be the time to e-mail Cathy at cnasmith@sympatico.ca to subscribe. Once you are signed on, information arrives electronically at regular intervals between issues of ACORN to keep you up to date. Your contact information stays completely confidential and you can “unsubscribe” any time you want.

First Parliament Site Goes Public

The Ontario government, in partnership with the City of Toronto and with the strong support of local heritage groups, has acquired a significant part of the site of Upper Canada's First Parliament. Culture Minister Madeleine Meilleur made the announcement on December 21.

The Province and a private landowner have agreed to a land exchange to secure a portion of the historic First Parliament site at 265 Front Street East in downtown Toronto.

Minister Meilleur also announced that the Ontario Heritage Trust (formerly the Ontario Heritage Foundation) has assumed ownership of this portion of the site and will take the lead in all future negotiations concerning the First Parliament site. The Trust will work with stakeholders including the federal and Ontario Governments, the city and community groups to develop options and strategies for the long-term preservation of the site.

"The site of Ontario's First Parliament Buildings is our cradle of democracy and a site of international historical significance," said Minister Meilleur.

"We are delighted to assume the lead role in the preservation of this significant heritage site," said the Honourable Lincoln M. Alexander, Ontario Heritage Trust Chairman and Ontario's 24th Lieutenant-Governor. "It is the birthplace of our systems of courts, land ownership and civil freedoms—democratic traditions that are the very measure of our strength as a province and as a society."

"Protecting this site for the public will help revitalize our downtown, drawing residents and visitors to experience the historical significance of this area," said Pam McConnell, City Councillor for Ward 28, Toronto Centre-Rosedale. "City Council strongly supports everyone's efforts in making this happen."

Artifacts now lying underground mark the site of Ontario's First Parliament Buildings. The brick buildings built specifically for the legislative assembly in the late eighteenth century were burnt to the ground by invading American troops during the War of 1812.

"The heritage community is very excited about the public acquisition of the First Parliament site," said Peter Carruthers, Chair of Heritage Toronto. "This is a tremendous victory for all of the individuals and organizations who have worked long and hard to see this first step become reality. Stage two and subsequent stages with all of their challenges and opportunities lie ahead."

The First Parliament Site Steering Committee, who contributed so much time and energy to pressing governments to act on this site, should be elated. This broad based community driven group of volunteers had from the very beginning the objective that the site be returned to public ownership.

Among the many people who deserve acknowledgment, I would particularly like to recognize Rollo Myers, Steve Otto, Councillor McConnell, Citizens for the Old Town, SEDERI and George Smitherman. Without their drive and determination this would never have come to pass. I also want to acknowledge the tremendous support of Caroline Di Cocco, Rosario Marchese, Steve Peters and Michael Prue.

Congratulations to all. This is a seasonally appropriate and timely present to all of those who have worked on this issue."

Tools for Protecting Our Landscapes Workshop

Friday, June 2nd, 10:00 am—4:00 pm
Chaffey's Lock

Spring 2006 Marks the First Anniversary of the amended Ontario Heritage Act.

Heritage volunteers and professionals alike will want to attend this practical workshop on protecting heritage landscapes, hosted by the Ministry of Culture and the Ontario Heritage Trust. The full-day session, immediately prior to the 2006 ACO/CHO Conference, will provide an overview of the international experience combined with the tools available to Ontario communities for protecting heritage landscapes. Smaller discussion groups will give participants an opportunity to learn about various conservation tools, including individual property designation, Heritage Conservation Districts, heritage easement agreements and planning options available through the Planning Act.

Who should attend? Municipal heritage committee members, municipal staff, heritage consultants, property owners and others interested in how to use the Ontario Heritage Act and the Planning Act to conserve the heritage of your community.

For more information, contact Mike Marcolongo at (416) 325-4578 or mike.marcolongo@mcl.gov.on.ca.

CHO / ACO

ANNUAL JOINT CONFERENCE

JUNE 2, 3 AND 4, 2006

CHAFFEY'S LOCK IN THE HEART OF THE RIDEAU CANAL

The Rideau is the nominee for Ontario's first World Heritage Site. All of the documents have been filed with the United Nations Selection Committee to have the Rideau Canal dedicated as Ontario's first site to be so recognized. The Canal, built between 1826 and 1831 to supply Upper Canada, in times of war, with a route that would by-pass the American guns on the St. Lawrence, still operates as it did then. This year's joint conference will not only take place on the shores of the Lakes Area at Chaffey's Lock in the century old Opinicon Resort Hotel, but also have preservation details provided, as the conference sails the canal itself. Saturday morning delegates will be bused to Jones Falls to board the cruise ship "General Brock." For two and a half hours, the ship will make its way to Chaffey's Lock where Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Culture, will give a Luncheon Address



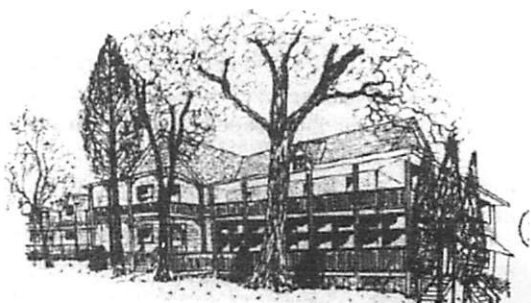
at the Opinicon. Boarding the ship again, the delegates will cruise to the top of the system where the water flows both to Kingston and to Ottawa. The cruise will end in Westport and everyone will be bused back to Chaffey's. At the same time as the boat cruise, for those who wish a land based tour, there will be a tour by motor coach of the landscapes and sites of the Rideau Canal and upper St. Lawrence. The coach tour will be in two parts in order to hear the Minister's luncheon address at the Opinicon. The purpose of this morning and afternoon tour is to show the imprints this complex cultural and natural history have left on the major landscape and illustrated sites. The tour will highlight this story with reference to the Canal and the rugged crystalline hills of the Frontenac Axis.

Lunches and dinners will all be at the historic Opinicon Resort Hotel. The Heritage Marketplace will be in the downstairs sitting room in the main building of the Resort facing the locks. All meals will be at the Opinicon Resort Hotel except for those having breakfast at other locations. (There are no other meal facilities available in the community.) The Conference will kick off Friday morning with at the Chaffey's Lock Community Hall with the Ministry of Culture workshop on "Tools for Protecting Our Landscapes."

The Rideau Landscape, 200 km will be brought together following the Boat Tour or Bus Tour. The complete two days are a progression where each presentation leads into the one following with the boat cruise or bus tour providing the visual Heritage Landscape examples. **Register prior to March 30, 2006.**

The Boat Cruise is limited to 70 passengers and the Bus Tour to 40 passengers. Make your choice as these are on a first-come-first-served basis.

Please note: the Opinicon Resort Hotel does not accept credit cards, nor do many of the Bed & Breakfasts. Their web sites are listed for your convenience. Make your selection, email your request and then send a cheque as a deposit when they confirm. The balance of your bill is payable by cheque when you check out. We are doing this in a very "Historic Manor", however, no barter is accepted. Don't wait...register now !



2006 Conference Program

ACCOMMODATIONS
within 20 Minutes of Chaffey's
(mention ACO/CHO Conference
for best rates)

Friday, June 2

- 9:00 to 4:00 **Ministry of Culture Pre-Conference Workshop**
- 5:00 to 6:00 Cash Bar on the 100 year old veranda of the Opinicon Resort Hotel
- 6:00 to 9:00 Welcome by Chairman of Township of Rideau Lakes Heritage Advisory Committee and Presidents of CHO and ACO followed by Dinner at the Opinicon Hotel

After Dinner Guest Speaker, Mayor Ron Holman, on *"Good Heritage Planning Begins with the Municipal Official Plan"*

Saturday, June 3

- 8:30 to 9:00 Registration at Chaffey's Lock Community Hall
- 9:00 to 9:30 A. Buses to Jones Falls for Cruise Passangers
- 9:30 to 11:30 Cruise Ship from Jones Falls to Chaffey's Lock, Locking through Davis Lock
- 9:00 to 12:00 B. Bus Tour, Major Landscape Study with Gordon Nelson, University of Waterloo & Susan Fournier
- 12:00 to 1:30 Lunch, Opinicon Hotel, Guest Speaker, Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Culture**
- 1:30 to 3:30 A. Cruise Ship Passengers rejoin ship for tour to Westport locking through Newboro the apex of the Rideau System
- 3:30 to 4:00 Cruise Passengers Bused back to Chaffey's Lock
- 1:30 to 4:00 B. Bus Tour Passengers board their bus for balance of tour with Gordon Nelson
- 4:15 to 5:00 Rideau Canal, a National Historic Site, preparation for World Heritage Designation Doug Stewart, Director General of Parks Canada**
- 5:30 to 6:30 Cash Bar on the 100 year old veranda of the Opinicon Resort Hotel
- 6:30 to 9:30 Annual Banquet at the Opinicon Resort Hotel**
Guest Speaker, the Minister responsible for National Historic Sites in Canada

Sunday, June 4

- 8:30 to 9:00 ACO Presidents' Meeting at Chaffey's Lock Community Hall
- 9:00 to 10:00 ACO Annual General Meeting and Branch Reports
- 10:00 to 10:15 Break
- 10:15 to 11:15 CHO Annual General meeting
- 11:15 to 12:00 CHO / ACO Show and Tell
- 12:00 to 1:00 Lunch at the Opinicon Resort Hotel

Opinicon Resort Hotel
Bed and Breakfast Rate CHO
1697 Chaffey's Lock Rd., Elgin, ON K0G 1E0
(613) 359-5233
Website: www.theopiniconresorthotel.com
Single \$77.00 plus tax and gratuity
Double \$60.00 plus tax and gratuity per person

The Cove Country Inn
Bed and Breakfast Rates CHO
Corner Main and Bedford Sts.,
Westport, ON K0G 1X0
(613) 273-3636 • Website: www.coveinn.com
Single or Double, rates start at \$85.00 plus tax

The White House Bed & Breakfast
Rates CHO
1601 Chaffey's Lock Road, Elgin,
ON K0G 1E0
(613) 359-5109
Single \$75.00 plus tax Double \$120.00 plus tax
CHO Special; 3 nights Single \$190.00,
Double \$295.00

Portland Bay Bed & Breakfast
Rates CHO
22 Water St. Portland, ON K0G 1V0
(613) 272-0222
Website: www.bbcanada.com/portlandbay
Single or Double \$110.00 plus tax

Stirling Lodge
Canal Road, Newboro, ON K0G 1P0
(613) 272-2435 • Website:
www.stirlinglodge.com
Single from \$110.00 plus tax

Stepping Stone Bed & Breakfast
Rates CHO
328 Centreville Road, Westport, ON K0G 1X0
(613) 273-3806
Website: www.steppingstoneinn.com
Single \$55.00 plus tax
Double \$65.00 plus tax

Westport Station Motel
Rates CHO
52 Concession St. Westport, ON K0G 1X0
(613) 273-3627
Website: www.westportstationmotel.com
Single \$79.00 plus tax
Double \$89.00 plus tax

Denaut Mansion Country Inn
5 Mathew Street, Delta, ON K0E 1G0
1-877-788-0388
Website: www.denautmansion.com
Double from \$135.00 plus tax

"IN THE HEART OF THE RIDEAU"
ANNUAL CHO/ACO CONFERENCE
 (Friday, Saturday & Sunday - June 2, 3 & 4, 2006)
 (OHS members welcome)
REGISTRATION FORM
 (*complete one form for each registrant)

	Before Mar. 30/06	After Mar. 30/06	Payment
FRIDAY SESSION (lunch included)	\$ 43.00	\$ 43.00	\$
FRIDAY DINNER/ OPENING RECEPTION	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$
CONFERENCE REGISTRATION (Sat. + Sun.) (Registration fee and Saturday lunch included) Rideau Canal Boat Tour Option <u>OR</u> Rideau/Upper St. Lawrence Bus Tour Option	pick one of: \$ 115.00 Boat \$ 100.00 Bus	pick one of: \$ 135.00 Boat \$ 120.00 Bus	\$
SATURDAY BANQUET	\$ 25.00	\$ 30.00	\$
SUNDAY LUNCH (optional)	\$ 18.00	\$ 18.00	\$
Heritage Market Place Table	\$ 10.00	\$ 15.00	\$
TOTAL REGISTRATION COSTS	(please enclose	your cheque)	\$

* All prices above include taxes and gratuities. **Deadline for registration May 12, 2006**

Payment Options:

Through **CHO**: No credit cards please.

Make cheque or money order payable to Community Heritage Ontario and mail, with a copy of this registration form to: **Community Heritage Ontario, 24 Conlins Road, Scarborough, Ontario M1C 1C3**

OR Through **ACO**: Cheque: Make cheque payable to The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario or provide Credit Card information:

Visa: _____ M/C: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Name on Card: _____ Signature _____

Mail cheque or credit card information along with a copy of this registration form to:
The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, Suite 204, 10 Adelaide St. East, Toronto, ON M5C 1J3

NAME (* please print) _____

ORGANIZATION _____

Address: (including municipality and postal code) _____

Phone No.: () _____ Fax No.: _____ Email: _____

Please indicate here if you prefer Vegetarian Meals _____

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario

Application for New Membership or Membership Renewal

A Note about the organization and Your Membership

As the ACO is structured, Provincial Council and the 13 Branches offer programs at the provincial or regional level, respectively. Provincial Council supports architectural conservation, provides technical advice through the PreservationWorks! program, organizes workshops, publishes ACORN, assembles the annual conference program and provides a head office function. Branch programs vary from Branch to Branch.

You may choose to be either an Ontario (Provincial) member or a Branch member.

All memberships are tax-creditable. All members receive ACORN and a discount on registration fees at the annual conference.

STEP 1

Please complete the form below:

Mr./Miss/Mrs./Dr./ No Title First Name _____ Last Name _____

Organization's Name (if applicable) _____

Address _____ Postal Code _____

Daytime Phone _____ Evening Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____

STEP 2

Please circle your choice of options A or B

- A** I would like to be a member of the _____ Branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario.
A portion of my annual dues will support province-wide programs.
- B** I would like to be an Ontario Member of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario and not be affiliated with any Branch.
All my annual dues will support province-wide programs.

Categories of Membership and Annual Dues - Check one:

- _____ Individual - \$30.00 _____ Household - \$35.00
- _____ Organization/Corporation - \$40.00 _____ Full-time Student - \$20.00

In addition to my membership, I would like to make a tax-creditable donation in the amount of \$ _____ .

STEP 3

Please return this form to: The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario
Suite 204, 10 Adelaide Street East, Toronto, ON M5C 1J3

If you choose Option A, please enclose a cheque made payable to the Branch of your choice
If you choose Option B, please enclose a cheque made payable to "The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario"

Quinte Region
Cobourg

Port Hope
Toronto Region
Guelph

ACO BRANCHES
Hamilton Region
Heritage Cambridge (Including Brant County)
Heritage Meaford

North Waterloo
South Bruce-Grey
Georgian Bluffs

London Region
Windsor Region

Date Cheque Received _____

Date Tax Receipt Issued _____ Membership Number _____



2006 Schedule of Events

Guelph & Wellington Branch of the
Architectural Conservancy of Ontario

February 19, 2006
2:00 - 4:00 pm

ACO Kick-off Event

Speaker Richard Moorehouse, Chair of the Ontario Heritage Trust
Guelph Civic Museum, 6 Dublin Street, Guelph
Special Guest: Scott Valens, President, Architectural Conservancy of Ontario

March 15, 2006
7:00 - 9:00 pm

Gothic Revival: Ontario's Definitive 19th Century Architectural Style

Speaker: Don Mikel
Mr. Mikel has long been involved in Heritage conservation and has written a book on the Guelph Correctional Centre, and is presently completing a book on Gothic Revival in Canada
* Election of Board and Executive to take place at this meeting

April 19, 2006
7:00 - 9:00 pm

The Historic Architecture of Guelph and Wellington - A Visual Timeline

Speaker: Dr. Gil Stelter, Professor Emeritus, University of Guelph
Gil Stelter is a well-known historian who has accumulated a vast collection of slides representing Guelph and Wellington's rich architectural legacy.

May 17, 2006
7:00 - 9:00 pm

Historic Parks and Landscapes in Guelph and Wellington

Speaker: Dr. Cecilia Paine, University of Guelph TO BE CONFIRMED

June 21, 2006
7:00 - 9:00 pm

Historic Barns and Rural Architecture

Speaker: Mike Marcolongo
Mr. Marcolongo is the Heritage Committee Advisor for the Ministry of Culture and has also restored and preserved a heritage barn. An onsite barn tour will be part of the presentation. Meeting site is 2162 Gordon Street.

September 20, 2006
7:00 - 9:00 pm

How the Railroad Changed our Landscape

Speaker: Ron Brown,
Mr. Brown is the author of The Last Stop (Ontario's Train Stations) and the author of numerous other books on Ontario's History and Architecture

October 18, 2006
7:00 - 9:00 pm

The Economic Value of Heritage Conservation

Speaker: Dr. Robert Shipley, Director, University of Waterloo Heritage Resource Centre

November 15, 2006
7:00 - 9:00 pm

The Growth of Towns and Villages of Wellington County

Speaker: Fred Dahms TO BE CONFIRMED

December 9, 2006
7:00 - 9:00 pm

SPECIAL EVENT: Antiques and Architecture Roadshow

Members of the ACO and the public can bring in artifacts and pictures of buildings and have these identified by experts.

January 17, 2007

Heritage Restoration Workshop: To be announced

February 21, 2007

Defining and Preserving Cultural Heritage Landscapes

Speaker: Gord Nelson

10th Annual ACO Dinner

Rollo Myers

After a year of hard work, successes and challenges, everyone seemed in the mood for a party. On November 4th the historic Arts & Letters Club in Toronto was packed. Attendance was up, sponsorship was up, auction sales were up and proceeds were up significantly. Thanks to all those who came out, and especially to those not able to attend who paid for tickets and donated them to others. Attendees were from Niagara Falls, Windsor, Ottawa, Cobourg, Waterloo, Dundas, Buffalo, Hamilton, St. Marys, Guelph, Cambridge, Kitchener, St. Catharines and Toronto.

President Scott Valens presented Bob and Marg Rowell with the special ACORN Award for their outstanding involvement since the founding of the North Waterloo branch 25 ago. Minister of Culture Madeleine Meilleure also sent a handsome written tribute to the Rowells. Scott thanked the dinner committee chair, Stan Cuomo, and members of the committee individually.

We were fortunate to have Andrew Powter, Senior Conservation Architect, Public Works and Government Services Canada, explain why Preservation is Good for the Environment, and lead the audience in his "The greenest building is one that already exists" rallying cry. Auctioneer-extraordinaire Ross Robinson enticed attendees to loosen their wallets once again.

An innovation this year, suggested by ACO member Stephen Otto, was a sign-up for an exclusive tour of a Rosedale masterwork by architect Ron Thom. The success of this concept suggests similar tours of rarely accessible architectural treasures as an annual feature.

Among those attending were Doug Franklin from the Heritage Canada Foundation, Marjorie Mercer, Assistant Deputy Minister of Culture, Richard Moorhouse of the Ontario Heritage Trust, Peggy Kurtin of the Conservation Review Board, Andrew Stewart of the McLean Foundation, Peter Carruthers and Ernie Buchner from Heritage Toronto, Paul King from Community Heritage Ontario and architect Eberhard Zeidler.

Special thanks go to the evening's sponsors:

Canadian Heritage Insurance Program

Cintec Canada Ltd.

Clifford Restoration Limited

Elgin Contracting & Restoration Ltd.

Empire Restoration Canada

E.R.A. Architects Incorporated

Sheldon & Judy Godfrey

The Gladstone Hotel

Goldsmith Borgal & Company Ltd.

Architects

Historic Restoration Inc.

Jones DesLaurier Insurance Management Inc.

Roof Tile Management Inc.

J.D. Strachan Construction Ltd.

Urbanspace Property Group

The Ventin Group Architects

Auction donors:

Urbanspace Property Group, Margie Zeidler, Bob Allsopp & Cathy Nasmith, Chris Borgal, Tony and Gail Rayment, Oh Canada Eh?, Niagara Helicopters Limited, Whirlpool Jet Boat, Niagara Parks Commission, Best Western Cairn Croft, Le Royal Meridien King Edward Hotel, the Hill Family and the Blyth Festival

Exclusive tour:

Stephen & Jane Smith; Stephen Otto



Mary Glendinning, Bob Allsopp and Joel Ceresne

Photo credit: Dan Schneider



Nina Chappel, Margaret Hill and Pat Malicki

Photo credit: Stan Cuomo



Pat Malicki and guest speaker Andrew Powter.

Photo credit: Rollo Myers



ACO President Scott Valens presented long-time members Marg and Bob Rowell with an award for outstanding achievement.

Photo credit: Dan Schneider



Jane Kennedy, Andrew Stewart and Joe Gill

Photo credit: Rollo Myers



Melissa Gordon, Peter Carruthers and Gail Rayment

Photo credit: Rollo Myers

Update from Port Dalhousie— A Question of Accountability

Deborah Kehler

An earlier issue of ACORN included a synopsis of the dire circumstances in which the Heritage Conservation District of Port Dalhousie, in the City of St. Catharines, on the southern shore of Lake Ontario, found itself. No sooner was Port Dalhousie designated as a Heritage District, than a development group, Port Dalhousie Vitalization Corporation (PDVC) unveiled a massive proposal including a hundred metre glass-covered condo tower, huge upscale shopping facilities, a 73 suite hotel and a 350 to 450 seat theatre.

The local community organization, PROUD, has struggled for the past year and a half, initially to interpret the response of the community, and then to make that response known.

For the past 11 months PROUD has published a monthly newspaper, the Port Reporter, rented commercial billboards throughout the city, and organized successful fundraising events (to sustain the newspaper, and pay for the billboards and legal fees). PROUD was subjected to threats of lawsuits (SLAPP actions, i.e. strategic litigation against public participation). These efforts by PROUD were entirely the work of volunteers.

October and November 2005 saw a curious turn of events. Two days after the publication of the results of a professional public opinion poll (conducted by the Brock University MBA Consulting Service) that showed that 77% of the city and 82% of the residents of Port Dalhousie opposed the proposed development, the developer mysteriously withdrew the development application in its entirety.

The timing was particularly interesting as the withdrawal occurred just hours before the release of the municipal planning department's report and the peer reviews that had been done on the heritage/design and traffic/parking aspects of the proposed development. Suddenly silence fell on the city, and it was determined by senior staff that nothing was to be released using the logic that the application was dead and therefore the months of research and analysis were to be ignored.

Three weeks after these events, the Mayor and seven members of St. Catharines City Council abdicated their responsibility as elected representatives to share information with their constituents. They preferred to take their instructions from a former city solicitor, now acting in his capacity as the lawyer for the developer.

Council was told very firmly that, as the PDVC proposal had been withdrawn and was effectively "dead," the Planning Report that had occupied the efforts of the planning department staff for over a year no longer served any purpose. Council was advised that the developer might feel compelled to seek redress if the Planning Report was released and had a negative effect on their property values. Following this curious request, council was, uncharacteristically, speechless, reserving their comments and questions for subsequent presentations by PROUD's volunteer lawyer Callum Shedden and private citizen and lawyer, David Black. There have been to date several applications under the Municipal Freedom of Information Act (MFIPPA), including one by PROUD, through Mr. Shedden, and one by the writer. The local newspaper, the St. Catharines Standard, also made an application under MFIPPA.

To our knowledge, all applicants under MFIPPA have received similar responses. Depending on the specifics of the request, applicants have been provided with very limited information ranging from an outline of the terms of reference of the Peer Reviews, to correspondence within various municipal departments. In all cases, the response from the City Clerk has shifted the onus from the municipality to the person or organization seeking information, necessitating appeals to the Privacy Commissioner.

The reason given by the City Clerk is that the "contents of the requested records are exempt from disclosure pursuant to: Section 7 (1) of MFIPPA" which permits a head [of a department] to refuse to disclose a record if the disclosure would reveal advice or recommendations of an officer or employee of an institution or a consultant retained by an institution." The legislation actually reads:

7. (1) A head may refuse to disclose a record if the disclosure would reveal advice or recommendations of an officer or employee of an institution or a consultant retained by an institution.

Total reliance on this discretionary exemption would make virtually anything other than the most objective data unavailable for public access. What is not mentioned in the Clerk's denial is that the legislation provides very clear guidelines not just permitting the release of information but making release mandatory.

What follows is the lengthy list of exceptions to this discretionary exception. Note the language.

(2) Despite subsection (1), a head shall not refuse under subsection (1) to disclose a record that contains,

- (a) factual material;
- (b) a statistical survey;
- (c) a report by a valuator;
- (d) an environmental impact statement or similar record;
- (e) a report or study on the performance or efficiency of an institution;
- (f) a feasibility study or other technical study, including a cost estimate, relating to a policy or project of an institution;
- (g) a report containing the results of field research undertaken before the formation of a policy proposal;
- (h) a final plan or proposal to change the program of an institution, or for the establishment of a new program, including the budgetary estimate for the program;
- (i) a report of a committee or similar body within an institution, which has been established for the purpose of preparing a report on a particular topic;
- (j) a report of a body which is attached to an institution and which has been established for the purpose of undertaking inquiries and making reports or recommendations to the institution;
- (k) the reasons for a final decision, order or ruling of an officer or an employee of the institution made during or at the conclusion of the exercise of discretionary power conferred by or under an enactment or scheme administered by the institution.

With all due respect to the wisdom of council and Clerk, there would seem to be

approximately 10 criteria that would make the release of the planning report mandatory.

What is clear is that St. Catharines has a council that is not prepared to act accountably and responsibly and direct that the Planning Report be released. Indeed some members of council seemed to believe that they would be interfering with a process already in place, i.e. MFIPPA applications, were they to make a decision that they are fully authorized to make. They seem to be unaware that MFIPPA exists to address the atmosphere of secrecy, which all levels of government are wont to generate. MFIPPA is remedial legislation. It is there to provide the public with a remedy to the parochial abdication of accountability demonstrated by this council.

Most, if not all of the applicants have commenced appeals to the Privacy Commissioner, Ann Cavoukian. In her address to the Ministry of Government Services at the Access & Privacy Conference in October 2005, the Privacy Commissioner noted that "although exemptions from disclosure will sometimes be necessary, discretionary exemptions should not be claimed solely on the basis that they are technically available; instead, they should be claimed only when there is a clear and compelling reason to do so (her emphasis). She further states in the same address:

Citizens cannot participate meaningfully in the democratic process and hold politicians and civil servants accountable unless they have access to information held by government, subject only to necessary exemptions that are limited and specific. Without openness and transparency, citizens know very little.

It is estimated that the MFIPPA process could take up to six months. Meanwhile the Mayor is working very hard to resurrect the proposal, or generate a new proposal without the benefit of the months of research and analysis that went into producing the planning and traffic materials that are the subject of the present inquiry.

Deborah Kehler is a volunteer researcher with PROUD.

Editor's Note: As ACORN went to press, PDVC had unveiled a new redevelopment proposal for Port Dalhousie. For details, and for PROUD's reaction, go to www.saveport.ca.

The Intriguing Shannon House on Waupoos Island

Des and Mary Hensman and Des Marcille

There have been many theories about the origin of the Shannon House on Waupoos Island. This limestone building is to be found, set into the top of a small hill on the west side of the island looking towards Smiths Bay. The structure is approximately 35 feet wide by 25 feet deep with walls that are almost three feet thick, and is two and a half storeys at the front and one and a half storeys at the back.



Shannon House (exterior)
Photo: Dr. Michael Shannon

Why and how could anyone have built a house like this in the first half of the nineteenth century (or earlier)? Why was it built on land that was still officially "Indian" territory? How could this unique building have been a settler's home on a little 900 acre island in Lake Ontario, when log houses were all that could be afforded?

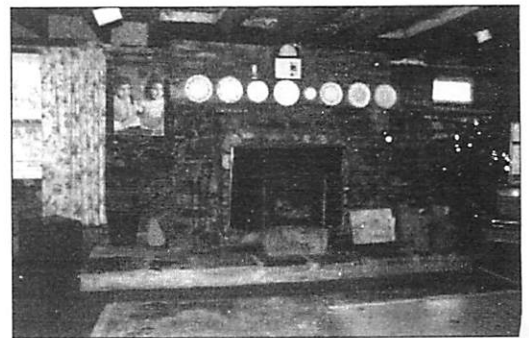
The authors have searched for information that might help to explain why and when this house was built, but nothing definitive has been found. In this article we summarize what we know and our conclusions to date, but much research is still needed and there are possibly other sources that might yield information about it.

Waupoos Island was not a part of the territory that was granted to the United Empire Loyalists in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It was owned by the Mississauga Indians until about 1855. However, it was settled by "squatters" who paid rent to the native people via an agent by the name of Timothy Pringle, who was also apparently one of the inhabitants.

In the early 1800s Irish immigrants did not have a claim to Loyalist land grants, so areas like Waupoos Island offered relatively low cost land to work on as tenants of the native people.

The Shannon family information goes back to the arrival of Alexander Shannon on Waupoos Island in 1819. It was said that he worked for one of the early squatters on the Island and subsequently met his wife, Martha Pierce. Martha, daughter of Patrick Pierce, was born in 1810 on the Pierce family homestead (Lot number 3 north of Smiths Bay) on top of the hill at Waupoos overlooking Smiths Bay and Waupoos Island.

Martha and Alexander married in 1825 and settled in a log house on a point of land that is now the northern extremity of Lot number 8, Waupoos Island. By 1836 they had four children and were expecting the fifth, and they moved to the then empty stone house on Lot number 2. (As proof of the authenticity of the family oral history, another story was told of how Alexander had to take his children by rowboat to Kingston to be baptized, stopping



Shannon House (interior)
Photo: Dr. Michael Shannon

overnight on Amherst Island. A search of St. Mary's Cathedral records in Kingston revealed the record of the baptism in Kingston in November 1831, of their daughter Anne Shannon.)

It is very unlikely that a pioneer with a wife and four children would have acquired sufficient capital to have a stone house of this size built on land that they did not own. The story is that Martha Pierce told her grandchildren, the son and daughters of Joseph Shannon, that when she was a young girl the stone house was already an "old, vacant house" on the Island.

It was around this time that the Crown was negotiating with the Mississaugas to acquire ownership of Waupoos Island, at a time when the settler-"squatters" there were still paying rent to Timothy Pringle. With the lands ceded to the Crown, the island was surveyed in 1856 by Samuel Benson and the regularizing of settlers claims commenced. In March 1860, Lot number 2 and the east part of Lot number 1 were deeded as an Indian Land Sale to Alexander Shannon for the sum of \$596.20.

Alexander Shannon and Martha Pierce raised 13 children in this house and his youngest son Joseph with his wife Ella Kearney had eight children all born there as well. Desmond, the oldest child and only son of Joseph and Ella, stayed on the farm. He married May Carey in 1918 but they had no offspring. Desmond was very generous and he was able to help his sisters and their families especially during the Depression years. At one time or another, all of his nieces and nephews lived in the Shannon house.

The Shannons lived in the house for three generations with the last Shannon owners being Desmond Shannon and his sisters, Johanna and Helen. Desmond's wife died in 1929 and about the same time his sister Maude lost her husband. Desmond invited Maude and her two children to return to the Island to live with him. Johanna and Helen were unmarried and they too returned to the Island in the 1930s. The farm was worked to its full potential with the help of "hired men" and members of the family.

Later, in the 1940s, as they were getting

older, the extent of farming had to be reduced and so it was decided to sponsor the immigration of one of the many Dutch families who came to Canada in the period following the end of the Second World War. That is how Herman Thissen and his family came to work the farm in the summer of 1949. Unfortunately Desmond died only one month after the Thissen family arrived. Desmond's sisters then decided to sell the farm to the Thissens who, in 1959, sold it to the Oblates of Mary Immaculate who remain the owners to this day.

It may be that the history of this old stone house is closely intertwined with the history of the exploration and development of Canada. Before 1652, the fur trade was an exclusive monopoly of various merchant companies operating in New France and only the clerks of these companies were allowed to trade with the natives. After 1653, laws were changed that allowed free trading to take place. The *coureurs des bois* became part of the system and they roamed freely, trading and moving goods. Thus trading was no longer restricted to Montreal and Quebec.

In 1673, the governor, Count Frontenac, established the first fort at Cataraqui (Kingston). In 1675 seigneurial rights for the area were granted to Robert Cavelier de LaSalle. This area extended some four leagues along the lake front and one half league inland and included the present Wolfe and Amherst Islands. The primary purpose of the fort was to protect the fur trade as this was the major commercial activity and it was through fur trade that the colony was sustained.

With the already extensive mapping of French Canada (maps as early as 1632 show Lake Ontario and a map of 1712 clearly depicts the peninsula and islands of what is now Prince Edward County), it is likely that the fur traders would have known of the existence of Waupoos Island with its potential as a centre for fur trading.

It is hypothesized that the Shannon House was built by the French, sometime in the period from 1750 to 1760 prior to the capture of Canada by the English. Fort Frontenac, Kingston,

was destroyed by the English and documents that might have mentioned the house were likely lost at that time.

The structure itself is of field limestone with lime mortar that was made in a kiln located in a field directly south of the house. Family accounts place the location of the kiln at a stone pile and depression in the field.

The first pictures of the house show it with the exposed stone walls which are almost three feet thick, and a full porch running across the second storey level. In the late 1800s the upper floor was finished and dormer windows placed in the roof, two at the front and one at the back. In 1918, major renovations were carried out and the stone walls were covered with a cement parging. Also a new porch with a roof across the full front of the house was built (this is the porch arrangement that still exists today).

About 1964, Desmond Marcille (great grandson of Alexander Shannon) of Morrison's Point rented the house for an extended period to use as a vacation property. He proceeded to carry out major renovations and upgrades at that time. During those renovations, he found a large number of wooden brackets on the ceiling joists in front of the fireplace. These appeared to have been used to support poles or rods for hanging items to dry.

The house construction is very unusual for the time period (when log houses were still the norm). Thick walls of fieldstone, heavy hewn beams and floor joists that are either "pit sawn" or hewn. The original fireplace was uncovered at that time and it still had the steel eyes for a crane for holding pots over the hearth. Desmond Marcille was told by his mother, Leah Shannon, that prior to the finishing of the upper floor, there were metal hooks attached to the rafters that might have been used for hanging skins to dry.

Further study is needed to confirm the theory that this was built by the French either as a trading post or a manor house for a seigneurie. There are still many records in archives in Quebec City that may contain information for this time period.

To be complete, this narrative also

needs to record that another story claims that this house was built by a "Count de Mounteney." There was an American by the name of Mountenay who apparently lived on Waupoos Island from about 1820 to 1849. Information about him, including a "Memorial of Mortgage" from 1849, indicates that he lived on Lot number 1 of Waupoos Island, whereas the stone house is located on Lot number 2. Mountenay returned to the U.S. about 1849.

Early French Canada history also includes a name "Sieur de Montigny," a Captain Jacques Testard, who served in the west from 1721 to 1731. Whether or not there were other persons with this title has not been determined at this time.

Whatever its origins, the Shannon house deserves to be preserved as an important record of the history of Waupoos Island and of the settlement of this part of Canada.

Des Hensman is the son of Laurie Shannon, a daughter of Joseph Shannon, the youngest son of Alexander Shannon. He (Des) came to Waupoos Island at the age of three in 1936 with his parents. They lived on the Island (in the tenant house of the Shannon farm) and at Morrison's Point until 1942 when they moved to Picton. Des spent essentially all of his free time helping on the Shannon farm up until the death of Desmond Shannon in 1949.

Mary (Murray) Hensman came to the Island as an infant with her parents in 1933. Her parents first worked for Lawrence Kearney (the uncle of Desmond Shannon) and then worked the farm on Lot number 9 until they moved off the Island in 1947.

Des Marcille and his mother Leah came back to the Island in 1948 in order to assist Desmond Shannon with the farming and at this time Leah returned to teaching at the Waupoos Island School.

Are you involved in the conservation of heritage buildings in your community?

If you answered YES, then you know someone whose work and dedication in preserving and promoting Canada's rich architectural heritage is deserving of a Heritage Canada Foundation Award.

We are now accepting nominations for our 2006 Awards and Prizes program and we are looking for YOUR input! Submit a nomination today for one of our six awards and prizes!

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Under the generous patronage of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, this prize is awarded to a municipal government, large or small, rural or urban, which has shown an exemplary commitment to heritage conservation.

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Lieutenant Governor's Award

This award recognizes outstanding achievement by an individual or group in the province in which the Heritage Canada Foundation's Annual Conference is held. This upcoming year, the conference will be held in Ottawa, Ontario.

Journalism Award

Awarded to a journalist whose coverage of heritage issues is judged to be outstanding.

Corporate Prize

Recognizes a business, large or small, which has demonstrated outstanding stewardship of its built heritage.

Achievement Award

Given jointly by Heritage Canada and a partner organization, this award honours individuals for excellence in their province or territory.

All nominations must be received on or before March 31, 2006, so please don't delay. For information on nomination procedures, contact the Heritage Canada Foundation at: 5 Blackburn Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 8A2

Tel. 613-237-1066 Fax 613-237-5987

E-mail heritagecanada@heritagecanada.org

London Region

Marlyn Loft

Geranium Heritage House Tour



Raleigh House (1866-67)
Photo: Bob Gladwell



St. George's Anglican Church (1890)
Photo: Bob Gladwell



The Bishop's Palace or Blackfriars (1875)
Photo: Bob Gladwell

Our 32nd annual Geranium Heritage House Tour took place on Sunday, June 5, 2005. For the first time the tour took walkers through Blackfriars, a quiet residential neighbourhood on the banks of the Thames River. With a rich and fascinating history, outstanding architecture, tree-lined streets and beautiful gardens, this charming and unique community has a distinct character all its own.

A total of 572 walkers purchased tickets for \$15, picked up a brochure at Jeanne Sauvé Public School and set out on the self-guided tour. The weather was perfect—warm and sunny. The excellent turnout and the \$1450 that was collected from sponsors resulted in a financially successful event.

Twelve sites, staffed by over 100 volunteers who pointed out interior and exterior architectural features, were visited. Houses that were open included small gabled cottages as well as grand mansions. As is usually the case on the Geranium Tour, some houses have changed little over the years while others have been modified significantly to accommodate modern lifestyles. One of the highlights was an 1853 Gothic Revival farmhouse that was originally owned by Alexander Leslie, the owner of Blackfriars Nursery. Raleigh House, an architectural treasure that is being lovingly restored by its new owners, and the Bishop's Palace, an outstanding Italianate structure, were the two mansions on the tour.

Walkers crossed the river on the 1875 Blackfriars Bridge, one of London's most treasured landmarks. It is believed to be one of the oldest surviving wrought iron bridges in North America that is still used for vehicular traffic. High water marks are still visible on some of the houses and are a reminder of the 1937 flood.

The tour ended at St. George's Anglican Church, an architectural gem with beautiful stained glass windows, where warm and weary walkers were served cool drinks, tea and goodies by church volunteers.

A 36 page souvenir booklet included photos and descriptions of all 12 sites as well as sketches of some of their architectural details. The booklet began with a brief history of London West, the area now known as Blackfriars. Walkers then followed the instructions and the map in the booklet to make their way from house to house.

Interesting details of the streetscapes (for example, attractive gable bargeboards, key hole windows, brackets under the eaves) were mentioned.

The Geranium Heritage House Tour committee extends a big thank you to everyone who made our 2005 tour possible: the homeowners, volunteers, sponsors and everyone who bought tickets. This is our main fundraiser and profits will be used to preserve our built heritage.

North Waterloo Region

Joyce Arndt



Heritage advocates Marg and Bob Rowell receive Awards of Excellence.
Photo: Herbert Whitney

The Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation held its Annual General Meeting on June 14, 2005 at St. Boniface School, Maryhill, in Woolwich Township. For the past 24 years, the North Waterloo Region Branch has been represented on the Foundation's Board of Directors. To celebrate the silver anniversary of the branch, the executive nominated Bob and Marg Rowell, each, for an Award of Excellence to recognize their valuable leadership in the ACO and outstanding work to

preserve built heritage in their home city of Waterloo. The Foundation also presented a Certificate of Congratulations to President Marg Rowell to mark the special occasion of the branch. Definitely a night for celebration!

The branch's Annual General Meeting was held on June 22, 2005 at Rockway Seniors' Centre, Kitchener. Guest Speaker Maryanne Weiler conducted a tour of Rockway Gardens and showed slides of its history (see the brief history below). At the conclusion of the meeting, new President Herb Whitney thanked the Rowells for their many years of involvement with branch activities and wished them a great holiday in their retirement from the executive.

Three programs in the fall provided opportunities for viewing architectural styles that are part of the rural landscapes of Waterloo Region or are prominent in urban neighbourhoods.

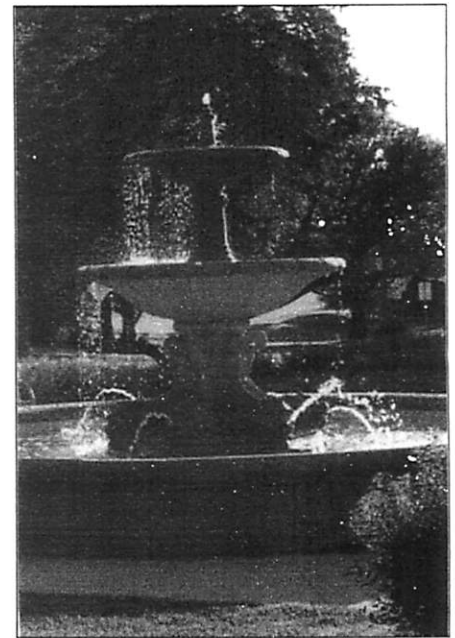
The branch held a driving tour through Maryhill and Woolwich Township in October. Sixteen members in attendance noted the architectural features of a Georgian-styled stone house dating from 1856; three log farm houses, disguised by modern coverings; and four bank houses. Of cultural interest, three wayside crucifixes testified to the main religious denomination in the area.

At the November meeting, new member and former geography teacher Ted Ray gave an illustrated talk on his personal interest, Building Watching. Ted believes that, as citizens learn more about the beauty of architectural styles of older buildings, they will come to admire and appreciate these buildings. They will not want heritage structures destroyed, but will want them preserved and protected.

The annual holiday get-together was held in December at Green Gables, a heritage guest house at 189 Queen St. North, Kitchener. The Summer 2000 issue of ACORN identifies this handsome stucco home as an elaborate cottage, of "west coast style" architecture. Proprietor Margaret Stacey related her experiences in restoring the house, which received the Mike Wagner Heritage Award from Heritage Kitchener in 1999.

Brief History of Kitchener Rockway Gardens

Rockway's colourful gardens, handsome evergreens, and weathered limestone rockery and waterfalls owe their existence to the Kitchener Horticultural Society. Its motto over the years has been "Community Beauty a Civic Duty."



Ornate fish sculptures spout water in a restored Janzen Fountain at Rockway Gardens.
Photo Rockway Gdns

The Society's major civic beautification program in the late 1920s coincided with Kitchener Council's plan to develop the city's eastern entrance (Hwy 8) into a commercial strip of billboards and a service station. Council was persuaded to lease to the Society a strip of land in that area to make the entrance an attractive one. This area soon expanded to include the adjacent municipal sewage facility (sludge farm).

The site became a formal garden, known for some time as the Janzen Horticultural Gardens. Two fountains were donated by the prominent Janzen family in memory of Henry L. Janzen and his wife, Elizabeth. Henry Janzen was mayor of Berlin (Kitchener) in 1890 and a founder of the Berlin Horticultural Society in 1911.

In 1933, the Society contracted W. J. Jarman, a Fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society of Great Britain and a notable English landscape architect, to design and direct the construction of the rock garden. For the construction of the rockery, local workers were plentiful due to the high rate of unemployment during the Great Depression. Many homeowners worked on the project several hours a week to offset property taxes, and in this way, were spared losing their homes.

The Schneider Memorial Fountain was donated by family members in 1964 to honour the late John Metz Schneider, founder of the J. M. Schneider meat packing plant in Kitchener, and his wife, Helena.

New for 2005 at Rockway Gardens is a pedestrian bridge in a Japanese design, spanning the central pond and enhanced with attractive landscaping. The citizens of Kitchener can be justly proud of Rockway Gardens, a visual delight for residents and visitors and a special location for wedding photography.

Sources of Information:

History of the Kitchener Horticultural Society, by H. W. Brown, Annual Volume, Waterloo Historical Society, 1938.

Rockway Gardens' First 50 Years 1933—1983, by Orval Ritz. Annual Volume, Waterloo Historical Society, 1983.

Quinte

David Bentley

Once again I am pleased to report that the Quinte Branch of the ACO is doing well, due mainly to our hardworking executive committee members, who carry out their positions so well.

The executive committee met in late October and the walking/driving tours for 2006 were laid out. I think we have arranged an excellent and varied choice of tours. The tours include Port Hope, the second part to our Marsh Front tour, Norwood, Amherst Island, Stirling, Huff's Island and Picton. Our guest speaker for March is noted historian, Dorothy Duncan, who will be speaking on Black Creek Pioneer Village. Our walks are open to the public.

The branch's Heritage Fund continues to be a welcomed source of funding for local projects which the branch deems worthy. During the summer I was pleased to attend the dedication ceremony of the replacement fountain in the village square in Colborne. As President I was humbled to hear Heritage Cramhie's President, Roseanne Quinn, talk about how our branch had been one of the first supporters for the fountain and had greatly influenced other organizations to add their financial support.

I also received a letter from Mary Lazier Corbett, President of the Quinte Educational Museum and Archives, requesting additional funding for the Victoria Schoolhouse. In her letter Mary wrote that the branch's funding was "one of the earliest received at an early critical date that gave the museum's work real legitimacy." It is very clear that our donations have helped to make these projects a success story.

The Victoria Schoolhouse was successfully moved during the summer and the QEMA is now working on restoring the building. Our members have access to an e-mail service (Yahoogroups.com) run by the branch, and members regularly receive the Built Heritage News from Cathy Nasmith, as well as other ACO news.

It was my hope last year that the branch could go one step further by setting up its own website. This is still something I am interested in doing.

As President I am involved in several local committees that have an architectural aspect to them. The "Bridge to Bridge" project, started by a Belleville citizen, Jane Simpson, is still working on the restoration and improvement of the back façades of stores along the city's Riverfront Trail. This committee is slowly progressing through the paperwork involved in such a large undertaking. I am proud to be a member of this committee and look forward to giving ACO members further updates in the future.

I also sit on the city's façade committee which makes \$25,000 per year available for building owners in the downtown to use for repairing their buildings' façades. This program, now in its fourth year, is of real assistance to owners who want to restore/upgrade their façades, but need financial assistance to do so. While the committee would like to increase the amount of money that is available at some point in the future we are unfortunately still working with a yearly budget of \$25,000. The good news is that the program seems to finally be catching on with the downtown owners and the number of requests for funding is increasing.

I was also pleased to serve on the Doors Open Belleville committee for 2005. This was the first year for the program, and it was a huge success with approximately 4000 visits to sites on the tour. The committee for Doors Open Belleville 2006 is already operational and the first ten sites have been selected.

ACO Port Hope House Tour

Mary Trevor

The 2005 "40th Anniversary" House Tour was a resounding success. The weather co-operated beautifully and all the tickets were sold!

The weekend started on Friday, September 30, with a reception at Dalewood Golf Club, to recognize all the people who, over these 40 years, had opened their homes, worked on committees, sold tickets, provided flowers... the list was endless. The evening was made possible by donations from the Municipality of Port Hope, RBC Dominion Securities, Cameco, Rivers Edge Condominiums, VIA Rail, Comfort Inn, Antiques on Queen and Hillcrest Inn and Spa.

I would also like to thank Phil Carter for his slide presentation and Holton Flowers for the decorations. My committee worked very hard locating all those to be invited and we had a great time doing it, as everyone was very appreciative of the phone call and often provided missing details for us about other homeowners that we were trying to contact. House Tour day itself was off to a good start with people lining up at the Town Hall by nine o'clock to see if we had any tickets left. I met a couple from Michigan who have been coming to our House Tour for many years now. They are heavily involved with the historical society in their home town and are still excited to come to Port Hope annually.

This year we showcased the following homes: Bluestone, Penryn Homestead, 38 & 42 Barrett's Terrace, 14 Cumberland Street, the Clemes Duplex (both sides were on view) and 4876 Lakeshore Road. The First Baptist Church at John and Augusta was our "institution" as part of their 150th anniversary celebrations. On Sunday, October 2, all the homeowners, together with this year's committee, got to take a quick tour of all the homes and finished up at the home of Diana and John Joynt for a wonderful dinner.

The entire weekend would not have been possible without the assistance of my wonderful and talented committee, who have my undying thanks for helping me pull it all together—Joan Moss, Diana Joynt, Penny Purcell, Carroll Dizenbach, Alena Litherland, Lee Caswell, Blaise Gaetz, Daphne Svenningson, Sue West, Meg Stinson and Helen Strathy. Thanks also go to Tony Trevor and Ross Purcell for putting out the marker boards and balloons and collecting them at the end of the day and to Gerry Tooke for his computer skills. And a huge thank you to all the other volunteers. Close to 3000 volunteer hours were contributed towards this event.

The House Tour relies heavily on the assistance of the people of Port Hope for their patience with our visitors. It appreciates the support of various departments of the Municipality of Port Hope including the police and the tourism office, and thanks Holtons Flowers, St Lawrence Flowers and Kathryn McHolm for the beautiful flower arrangements; Furbys, Lord Russborough's Annex, Acanthus Interiors, Antiques on Queen and Days Gone By (Cobourg) for ticket sales; and all our wonderful advertisers. Everyone's contribution has resulted in a cheque to the ACO for \$31,900!

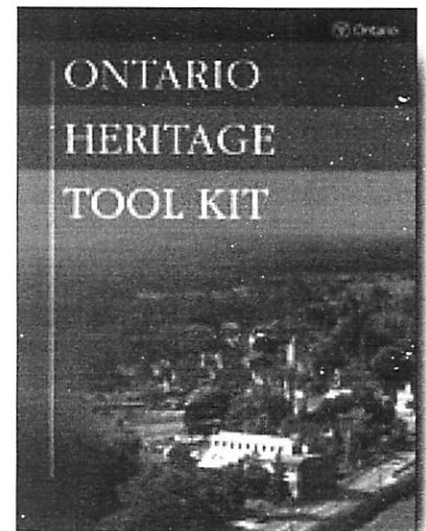
Mary Trevor was chair of the 2005 House Tour Committee.

Ontario Heritage Tool Kit

On Heritage Day, February 20, Culture Minister Madeleine Meilleur launched the Ontario Heritage Tool Kit. The tool kit is a series of educational guides that explain the Ontario Heritage Act, the Planning Act, the Historic Places Initiative, and related programs.

The tool kit is designed to help municipal Councils, municipal staff, Municipal Heritage Committees, land use planners, heritage professionals, heritage organizations, property owners, and others understand the heritage conservation process in Ontario.

Check out the new tool kit on the Ministry of Culture web site at www.mcl.gov.on.ca.



Windsor Region

Pat Malicki



Presentation of the Heritage Canada Foundation Achievement Award to SOS-Églises. *From left to right:* Paul Trépanier, Natalie Bull, Paul Chauvin, Roger St-Pierre, André Chénier and David Tremblay. *Photo: Le Rempart, Southwestern Ontario's French language weekly*

The past several months have been very interesting—and very encouraging—for Windsor Region Branch.

On November 1, 2005, the City of Windsor Council approved a Corporate Cultural Affairs Department. Hallelujah!! There was an impromptu celebration by the local arts, cultural and heritage community at a local watering hole that evening. Part of the recommendation approved by Council was that responsibility for Windsor's community museum would be transferred from the Windsor Public Library Board to the

City of Windsor. Just before Christmas, it was announced that Mary Baruth has been appointed the Acting Manager of Corporate Cultural Affairs. A native Windsorite, Mary recently returned to Windsor after spending several years in Norfolk County, and has worked very hard to get this new department approved.

On December 7, the Heritage Canada Foundation (HCF) formally presented their Achievement Award to SOS-Églises. The presentation and reception were held at the Club l'Âge d'Or in Pointe-aux-Roches, with over 100 people attending (several had been supporting SOS-Églises financially over the past five years, but never come out into the open, so to speak). The HCF was represented by Natalie Bull, Executive Director, and Carolyn Quinn, Director of Communications. Their Ontario Governor, Rollo Myers, was unable to attend at the last minute, but sent a letter of congratulations. Nuzhat Jafri, Acting Manager of Heritage Policy and Program Development with the Ontario Ministry of Culture, also attended. All of them gave warm words of praise for what SOS-Églises has done over the past five years. This was a shot in the arm for SOS-Églises—encouragement for them to keep going.

Shortly after this presentation, Bishop Fabbro participated in a formal groundbreaking for the new church and said that the building of the new church would heal the wounds. Go figure!

In November 2004, ACO Windsor Region requested designation of the two churches. After much delay, the latest word that we have is that this request is to be discussed at a March meeting of Lakeshore Council.

Once again, we partnered with CBC-TV and the local Municipal Heritage Committees and produced 10 more Heritage Highlights. We are expanding into Essex County and included "Islandview" in Amherstburg and the King Estate in Kingsville. We hope to have a Highlight from Tecumseh for 2006. This project would not be possible without CBC-TV staff volunteering their time for filming, interviews and editing. Thank you CBC!

Last, but certainly not least, our 2005 Photo Contest (Barns) received about 100 entries. The winners were (in order):

Colour: Carl Kotevich, Monica Purdon, and Debbie Arnold
Black & White: John Renaud, Anyd Stockdill, Andrew Deane

Digital: Sandra Elor, J. Michael Groh, and Craig Brannagan

As always, our thanks to our sponsors (new and returning): Bergeron Art & Frame, Black's, Turnaround Camera, St. Louis Studio, MacLarens Photo Finishing, Tureks, The Times, Preney Print, Il Gabiano Ristorante, Vermouths, and Reades Photography. Mike Kotevich, a student in the Graphic Arts program at St. Clair College, designed the 2005 poster.

This contest wouldn't be possible without the assistance of our judges—photographers Spike Bell and Don Trussler, and architects John Hrovat and Mike DiMio—and the superb organizing committee of Deb Boersma, Rina Guarascio and Laura Renaud.

The Awards Reception was held at the Common Ground Gallery at Mackenzie Hall and the photos were displayed at various locations in downtown Windsor throughout the summer. They will be displayed again at the J. R. Park Homestead (Kingsville) during April and May.

Watch for details of the 2006 contest on the ACO website, or contact Deborah Boersma at dboersma@stclaircollege.ca.

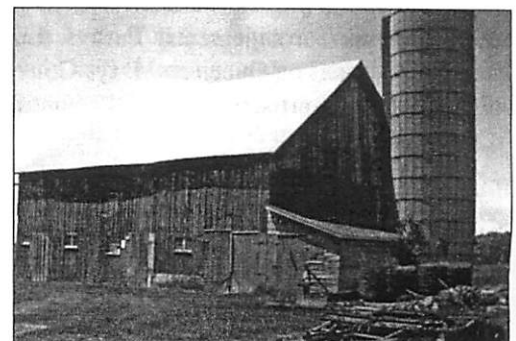
See you all on the Rideau Canal in June!!



John Renaud's first prize photo (black & white)

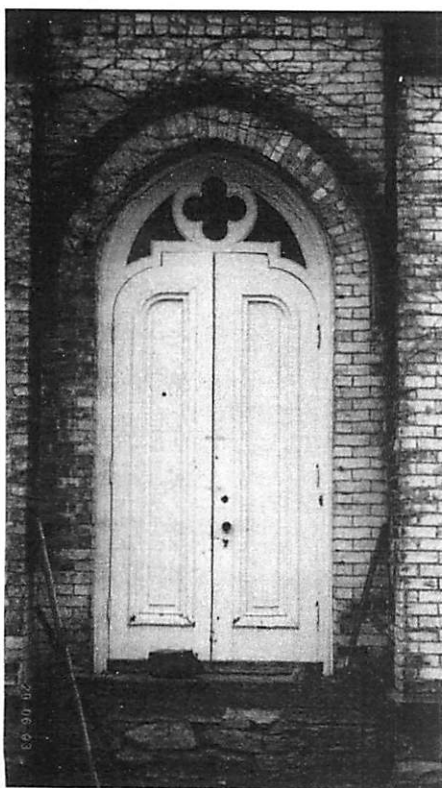
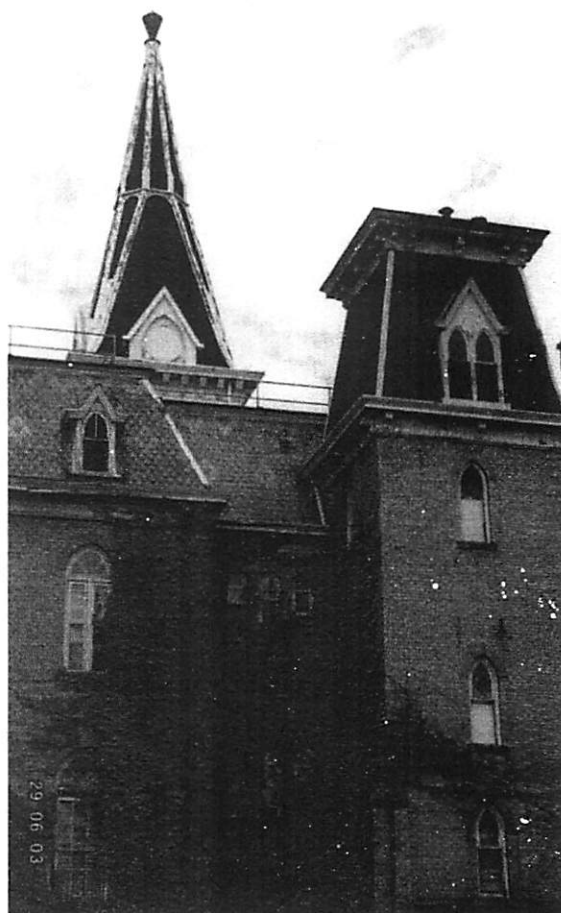
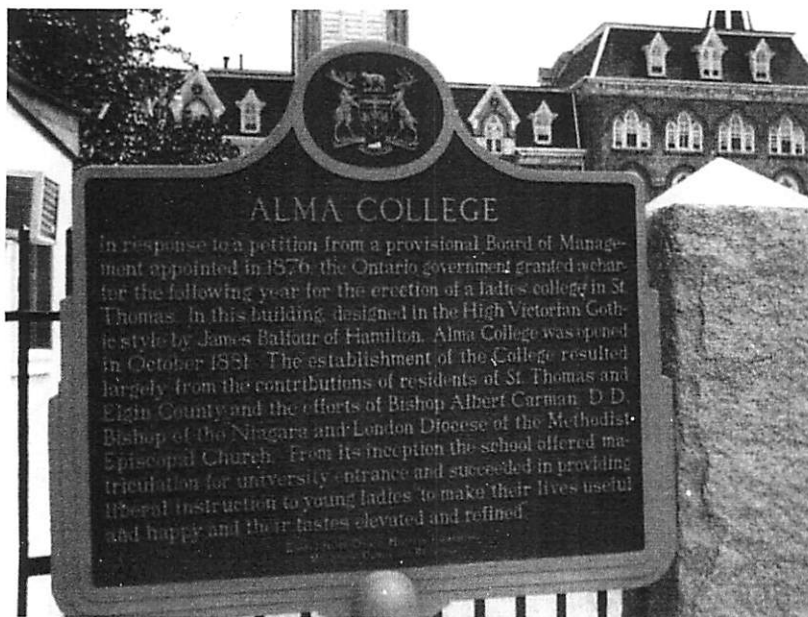


Carl Kotevich's first prize photo (colour)




Sandra Elor's first prize photo (digital)

Photos of Alma College, St. Thomas. The Heritage Canada Foundation has included the college in the "Top Ten" list of endangered places in Canada.
Photos courtesy PreservationWorks! and Paul R. King



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